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## Marcos Reported to Offer Pledges On Political and Military Changes

5 - By BILL KELLER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 22 — Senator Paul Laxalt said today that President Ferdinand E. Marcos had agreed to permit American observers at Philippine elections in 1986 and 1987, and to relax his control over the Philippine military.

Mr. Laxalt, who reported to President Reagan today on his informal diplomatic mission last week, said in a statement that the promises were "positive steps" toward the political and military initiatives urged by the Administration.

"We now have a base line from which future reforms can be assessed," said Mr. Laxalt, a Nevada Republican.

### 'No Hostile Messages'

Mr. Laxalt said that contrary to what some Administration officials had earlier told reporters, "there were no hostile messages delivered on my part, and there was no rejection of our views on President Marcos's part."

But an official familiar with Mr. Laxalt's meetings in Manila said Mr. Marcos had made no commitments on other points raised by the Senator.

Of particular concern, the official said, was the fact that Mr. Marcos had indicated that he planned to reinstate Gen. Fabian C. Ver as head of the armed forces if the general is acquitted of involvement in the slaying of the opposition leader Benigno S. Aquino Jr. A verdict in the trial of General Ver and 25 other defendants is expected soon.

Mr. Laxalt reportedly warned Mr. Marcos that a reinstatement of General Ver "could easily become a flash point for the Congress" because of assertions that the court is biased in favor of the general, a friend and relative of Mr. Marcos.

Mr. Marcos, the official said, reported that "he had an honored commitment" to reinstate the general "perhaps for a year or so" but that he "would consider" Mr. Laxalt's advice.

The official said Mr. Laxalt had brought back a long report from the Philippine military asserting that the Government was successfully containing the Communist insurgents.

### 'Aware of the Insurgency'

"Essentially," said the official, "it was a highly detailed report that said they were aware of the insurgency problem and successfully meeting it in military terms."

The official said Mr. Laxalt had also brought back a second report on what Mr. Marcos described as improving economic trends.

Mr. Laxalt, a close friend of President Reagan, was sent to Manila to express the Administration's growing concern about deteriorating economic, military and political trends in the Philippines.

In their four hours of meetings last Wednesday and Thursday, Mr. Laxalt said, Mr. Marcos "stated that the military is now being decentralized so that field decisions can be made there rather than in Manila."

Philippine diplomats have indicated a willingness in Manila to relax the tight grip that Mr. Marcos and his political allies, including a cadre of generals loyal to General Ver, have on troops trying fighting the insurgents. American military and intelligence officials have said the Philippine military is hampered by corruption and demoralization stemming from Manila's direct control.

### El Salvador Is Cited

The official familiar with the meetings said Mr. Laxalt had pointed out that El Salvador had won a large measure of credibility when foreign observers were allowed at the presidential elections last year.

According to the official, Mr. Marcos acknowledged that "he had a credibility problem" and volunteered to allow news organizations and United States officials at the local elections scheduled next year and the national elections set for 1987.

An Administration official who said he had read cables from American diplomats in Manila about the Laxalt mission said the official messages painted a gloomier picture of the encounter.

The official said Mr. Marcos had listened without a sign of approval as Mr. Laxalt laid out the Administration's concern about the spreading insurgency of the Communist New People's Army, the evidence of growing anti-

Marcos sentiment and the need for economic, military and political changes.

"He dismissed Laxalt's points one by one," the official said.

### 'Getting Marcos's Attention'

But White House officials said the Laxalt mission had not been expected to elicit specific promises from Mr. Marcos, only to show that the sense of concern within the Administration had risen to the Oval Office.

"The mission was a success in terms of getting Marcos's attention," a White House official said.

While Mr. Marcos has repeatedly said the threat posed by the Communist insurgents is exaggerated, recent reports by the Central Intelligence Agency and Defense Intelligence Agency point to a deterioration in the Philippines, according to officials who have been briefed on the assessments.